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ABSTRACT

This report briefly describes Philadelphia's Joint Public Parochial Planning Councils (JPC) project and presents an evaluation of the project's impact during the 1975-76 school year. The JPC project is intended to provide sustained interaction between the Philadelphia School District and the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. During 1975-76, 102 joint programs involving 354 teachers and 5,284 students from 66 public and 60 parochial schools were in operation. Data for the evaluation were gathered through onsite observation of joint programs, as well as separate questionnaires completed by a sample of principals, teachers, and students. Evaluators found that most JPC participants were satisfied with their program activities and credited the project with improving communications between public and parochial schools. Although the survey showed no significant change in student attitudes, teachers and students reported that intersystem social relationships were established and progressed throughout the year. Sample copies of the observational report form and the survey questionnaires are included in the appendix. (Author/JG)

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JOINT PUBLIC-PAROCHIAL PLANNING COUNCILS

Final Report

1975-1976

Report Number 7702

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FEDERAL EVALUATION RESOURCE SERVICES

OFFICE OF RESEARCH AND EVALUATION

THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF PHILADELPHIA

June 1976

EA 008 631

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

THE PROJECT 1

RATIONALE 1

EXPECTED OUTCOMES 1

PROJECT DESIGN 2

PREVIOUS FINDINGS 3

THE 1975-1976 EVALUATION 3

EVALUATION DESIGN 3

IMPLEMENTATION 4

ATTAINMENT OF OBJECTIVES 6

SUPPLEMENTAL DATA 10

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS 11

TABLE 1: PROGRAM STATISTICS 13

TABLE 2: JPC PROGRAM SUMMARY 14

ABSTRACT

The Joint Public Parochial Planning Councils Project (JPC), provides a vehicle for sustained interaction between the School District of Philadelphia and the Archdiocese, through district Councils and joint school programs.

Project evaluation assessed program implementation and impact on inter-system student attitudes.

A total of 102 joint programs involving 66 public and 60 parochial schools were in operation during 1975-1976. These programs included 354 teachers and 5,284 students. Results from questionnaires and the evaluators' observations found that the majority of the project participants were satisfied with their program activities and credited the JPC project with enabling better communications between public and parochial schools at all levels. For the students and parents involved in the joint programs concerned with ethnic studies, JPC provided an increased awareness and understanding of the cultural diversity found in Philadelphia.

Although a pre and post attitude survey failed to find a significant change in student attitudes toward those from the other system, teachers and students reported that intersystem social relationships were established and progressed throughout the project year.

THE PROJECT

RATIONALE

The Joint Public-Parochial Planning Councils Project (JPC) recognizes the importance of intersystem cooperation in providing quality education to all Philadelphia school students. The JPC, through its district councils and joint school programs, provides a vehicle for sustained interaction between the two systems.

JPC has been guided in its organization and program formulation by the following overall needs:

1) To develop a climate of cooperation between the public and parochial school systems of Philadelphia.

2) To involve the students in both systems in constructive programs of an educational or educationally-related nature.

3) To provide the two systems with a mechanism to plan, organize, direct, and implement joint activities involving students, parents, teachers, and administrators.

4) To foster awareness and understanding among the respective school system populations.

5) To explore new means of furthering good community relations.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

Projected program accomplishments for the fourth year of the project are:

1. To increase the number of interactions between students of public and parochial schools in this program and in spin-off programs.

2. To encourage the eight District Planning Councils to initiate new joint programs.

3. To systemize communication between public and parochial schools on the operational level.

4. To expand opportunities for parents of both systems to develop better relations.

5. To improve the quality and increase the quantity of dissemination on this project specifically, and of inter-system cooperation generally.

PROJECT DESIGN

Sixty-six public and 65 parochial schools will participate in joint programs involving approximately 8,700 students in grades K-12 and 350 teachers. Program subject areas will include science, ethnic studies, communications, creative arts, vocational skills and physical education. Many of the activities will use the Bicentennial as a focus for their programs.

Approximately 100 parents will participate in a total of 5 workshops to be held in mathematics, mental health, behavior modification and training as voluntary aides. Three districts plan to have district-wide workshops for public and parochial principals and other school personnel to cooperatively explore ways of meeting educational needs. Two districts will provide principal/teacher orientation workshops for those who are participating in other JPC activities.

The eight sub-districts will continue to operate district councils to coordinate and plan joint activities. Following a recommendation from the 1974-1975 on-site evaluation team, they will be encouraged to meet at least every six weeks.

PREVIOUS FINDINGS

The project evaluation for 1973-1974 focused on program implementation. Results from on-site monitoring and program-participant questionnaires indicated that the success of joint student programs depended on the extent to which they met regularly and frequently enough, were enjoyable, and provided students with opportunities for interaction.

The 1974-1975 evaluation continued to assess program implementation and looked at the project's impact on inter-system student attitudes. Results from questionnaires and the evaluators' observations indicated that the majority of the project participants were satisfied with their program activities and credited the JPC project with enabling better communications between public and parochial schools. Although a pre-post attitude survey failed to find a significant change in student attitudes toward those from the other system, teachers and students reported that inter-system social relationships were established and progressed throughout the project year.

THE 1975-1976 EVALUATION

EVALUATION DESIGN

The current year's evaluation of the JPC project continued to assess program implementation. In addition, the evaluation sought to determine if participation in project activities affected the friendship choices of the student participants.

An observational form (Appendix A) was developed for use

by the evaluators during on-site monitoring of joint student programs. Principal and teacher questionnaires (Appendix B) were distributed to a random sample of participants to ascertain the perceived effectiveness of the JPC activities.

A student sociometric questionnaire (Appendix C) was administered to 264 students in 11 joint activities at the beginning and again at the end of the program. Each student received a pre and posttest score calculated on the percentage of cross-system choices indicated. A correlated t-test was used to determine if there was a significant gain between pretest and posttest in the number of cross-system choices. Four programs were periodically observed to record instances of cross-system interaction between students.

IMPLEMENTATION

Project implementation closely followed the proposed project design. Supportive program statistics are provided in Attainment of Objectives 1, 2, and 4.

City-wide Coorddinators

The public and parochial city-wide coordinators have provided administrative support to the project, as a whole, and directional assistance to the district coordinators and councils. This enabled the project to expand and decentralize, while maintaining its prior level of effectiveness. Also, one city-wide JPC newsletter was published.

Joint Public-Parochial Activities

In addicion to implementing 102 joint activities within the JPC project, there is evidence that JPC has served as a catalyst for inter-system cooperation outside of the project.

Seventeen out of the 26 principals responding to questionnaires indicated that their school had participated in inter-school sharing of equipment, facilities and materials outside of the program. Thirteen of the 26 principals reported that the JPC program had served as an impetus for non-JPC joint public-parochial activities.

Principal questionnaire comments and interviews with district coordinators provided examples of other joint activities. School personnel and parents have participated in joint faculty meetings and in joint Home and School workshops and meetings.

Inter-system Student Attitude

Although no statistical evidence was found to support significant attitude change during the year, an indicator of progress in inter-system social relationships which suggests favorable changes in attitude was that 30 of the 36 teachers questioned expressed satisfaction in the amount of social progress students made during the year.

ATTAINMENT OF OBJECTIVES

Objective 1: To provide opportunities for interaction between public and parochial school students in joint educational or educationally related programs.

The objective was attained.

One hundred two joint programs were in operation during the 1975-1976 school year. The programs involved 66 public and 60 parochial schools and provided activities for over 5,000 students (Table 1). Although the number of student participants has remained approximately the same, the number of different programs has increased by 46%. This reflects both an increase in the variety of activities offered by the project and a reduction in the number of large programs.

The evaluators monitored 26 joint programs to assess program organization and student interaction. In looking at facilitators of interaction, it was found that 18 of 26 programs used seating/grouping arrangements which were conducive to cross-system communication. Sixteen of the programs included opportunities for student interaction through such measures as a student involvement in small group activities and allowance for student mobility within the group. Structured affective techniques and/or informal affective measures were observed in 9 of the 26 programs.

In all of the observed programs, the students appeared to be interested in the activities. It was concluded that the students exhibited a comfortable working/socializing relationship in 21 cases.

Responses from 33 of 36 teachers on the principal-teacher questionnaire indicated that they were satisfied with the progress made by the students in the subject area covered by the JPC activity. Thirty of them were also satisfied with the progress made in social relationships between the students from different schools. Responses from 22 of 26 principals on the principal-teacher questionnaire indicated that they were satisfied with the progress made by the students in the subject area covered by the JPC activity.

Objective 2: To have the eight planning councils at the local level plan, organize, and implement joint activities, including students, parents, teachers, and administrators.

The objective was attained.

All of the eight districts operated JPC Councils. Each was headed by one public and one parochial school coordinator acting as liaisons between the local programs and the city-wide coordinators.

Seven of the districts had councils which met an average of 4 times between October, 1975 and April, 1976. The districts included principals, other school administrators, teachers and parents on their councils. Four of these districts also included students and community representatives.

The evaluators attended 6 meetings. It was observed that agendas were directed toward the issues of council organization, JPC orientation, updating program status, and planning. Several of the councils were concerned with organizing district-wide JPC programs, such as parent, teacher and principal workshops, and art and musical presentations. Although one of the councils did not meet on a regular basis, it did provide proposals to be considered

for the 1976-1977 school year.

Objective 3: To develop better communications between public and parochial systems on all levels.

The objective was partially attained.

Twenty-two of the 26 principals and 32 of the 36 teachers who had responded to the JPC principal-teacher questionnaire indicated that there had been an increase in communication between systems as a result of participation in JPC activities. Participants cited telephone conversations and meetings as the primary vehicles used in planning for JPC. Several principals and teachers reported that there is now increased communication between the schools regarding non-JPC concerns.

The evaluators made periodic visits throughout the year to 2 ethnic studies and 2 arts and crafts programs in order to ascertain if there was an increase in the incidence of cross-system communication among students. The percentage of cross-system instances of interaction was calculated from the total interactions observed during unstructured time at each session. It was found that all 4 programs exhibited a continuous upward trend in the percentage of cross-system interaction. Program interaction scores ranged from 0 to 25% at the first observed session and from 38% to 58% at the last sessions observed. However, the student sociometric questionnaire did not indicate that there was a significant increase in the percentage of cross-system friendship choices.

Objective 4: To provide opportunities for interaction between parents of public and parochial students in project activities.

The objective was attained.

Seventy parent aides were involved in 22 of the joint student programs. Approximately 80 parents participated in 5 workshops sponsored by JPC. In addition to this, many of the joint programs had culminating activities to which the parents of the students were invited.

Objective 5: To provide opportunities for students, parents, and teachers to increase their awareness and understanding of the cultural diversity represented in Philadelphia's communities and the contributions of the various cultural and ethnic groups to the Nation's heritage.

The objective was attained.

Twenty-one JPC programs involving 44 schools, 47 teachers and approximately 1,000 students were concerned with either ethnic studies, the Philadelphia area heritage, or activities which incorporated Bicentennial themes. Trips of historical, cultural, and social interest were taken by several of the groups. Many programs with art, drama and musical activities used content and themes from colonial times in carrying out their creative arts.

SUPPLEMENTAL DATA

One aim of the JPC Project is to increase the level of public-parochial cooperation apart from JPC sponsored activities. Approximately one-half of the principals and teachers who have responded to the evaluation questionnaire indicated that JPC has served as an impetus for other types of cross system cooperation. In many schools, educational facilities and resources such as school auditoriums and visual and auditory equipment are now being shared. Principals and teachers reported examples of spin-off activities between schools including joint assemblies, trips, school newspapers, science fairs, and faculty meetings.

Twenty-six percent of the joint student activities were held during the school day. The remaining programs took place after school and on Saturdays. JPC is concerned with identifying those conditions which influence successful program implementation. Therefore, the informal process evaluation included comparisons of projected and observed attendance at all of the monitored student activities which took place after school. It was found that the student programs had an average attendance rate of 73%. Project staff considered this to be satisfactory. Responses on the teachers' questionnaires concerning program effectiveness and results on the student sociometric questionnaires will be analyzed in terms of during school time programs and after school programs in order to ascertain if the time of day is a significant factor in program effectiveness.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The Joint Public-Parochial Planning Councils Project operates as a vehicle for inter-system activities involving school administrators, teachers, students and parents. Through the public-parochial interaction and communication which results from participation in the joint programs, increased inter-system cooperation i encouraged.

During 1974-1975, JPC successfully brought public and parochial schools together in educationally-related programs and developed better communications between the schools at all levels. Lines of communication were also opened between parents of parochial and public school children. With assistance from the city-wide project staff, seven of the eight district planning councils were organized and were assuming the responsibility of planning, organizing, directing, and implementing the joint activities. For the students and parents involved in the joint programs concerned with ethnic studies and the Philadelphia area heritage, JPC provided an increased awareness and understanding of the cultural diversity found in Philadelphia. Data from evaluator observations indicated that intersystem interaction among pupils was established and progressed throughout the project year.

A major success of the JPC project for 1975-1976 lies in the increased impact that it has had on joint public-parochial system interaction. There was an increase of over 46% in the number of joint programs, 5,300 participating students, and a 32% increase

in the number of participating teachers, compared with 1974-1975 figures. In addition to the expansion in JPC participation, the project is credited with motivating numerous spinoff activities such as joint faculty meetings, parent workshops and interschool sharing of facilities, materials and equipment.

Evaluation findings suggest several implications for future project implementation. With the successful establishment of JPC district councils accomplished, greater emphasis needs to be placed on council members assuming more responsibility in the coordination and implementation of joint activities. In view of the continued increase in the number and size of JPC programs, the diffusion of project-associated-responsibilities should be encouraged.

TABLE I

JPC PROGRAM STATISTICS

	1973 - 1974	1974 - 1975	1975 - 1976
Number of Programs	30	70	102
Public Schools	35	63	66
Parochial Schools	31	57	60
Teachers	133	268	354
Students	2,925	5,490	5,284

TABLE 2

JPC PROGRAM SUMMARY

1975-1976

District	Number of JPC Programs	Public Schools	Parochial Schools	Teachers	Students	Parents
1	7	6	6	23	500	14
2	13	8	8	73	310	50
3	9	9	8	39	847	12
4	3	4	4	31	298	2
5	4	8	8	23	584	6
6	3	2	2	8	160	2
7	30	18	13	93	907	34
8	33	11	11	70	1,628	30
Total	102	66	60	268	5,284	150

*includes 80 parents participating in JPC workshops

APPENDIX A

Program Observational Rating Scale

OFFICE OF RESEARCH AND EVALUATION
FEDERAL EVALUATION RESOURCE SERVICES

JPC PROJECT

PROGRAM OBSERVATIONAL RATING SCALE

Schools_____ Program_____

Date_____ Observer_____

Beginning Time _____ Ending Time_____

I. Program Information

A. Number of public school students_____

B. Number of parochial school students _____

C. Are there parent volunteers present? _____

Yes_____ No_____

If yes, how many?_____

II. Program Description

Briefly describe the activity observed. Include program content, class organization and teacher/student behaviors related to the activity.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

III. Facilitators of Interaction

Place a check next to either yes or no to indicate the condition observed. The impression section may be used to substantiate what you have recorded.

A. Does the seating/grouping arrangement of the students facilitate interaction?

Yes _____ No _____ Impressions: _____

_____

_____

B. Does the program activity include opportunities for student interaction through such measures as student involvement in small-group and independent activities and/or allowance for student mobility within the group.

Yes_____ No_____ Impressions:_____

_____

_____

C. Does the teacher appear to encourage student interaction through 1) structured affective techniques such as social games and role playing, and/or 2) informal affective measures?

Yes_____ No_____ Impressions: _____

_____

_____

IV. Student Participation

Place a check next to either yes or no to indicate the condition observed. Use the impression section to substantiate what you have recorded.

A. Do the students appear to enjoy being in the program?

Yes_____ No_____ Impressions: _____

_____

_____

B. Do the students appear interested in the program's activities?

Yes_____ No_____ Impressions: _____

_____

_____

C. Do the public school students and the parochial school students appear to be comfortable working and/or socializing together?

Yes_____ No_____ Impressions:_____

_____

_____

APPENDIX B

Principal and Teacher Questionnaire

THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF PHILADELPHIA
OFFICE OF RESEARCH AND EVALUATION
TITLE III EVALUATION

JOINT PLANNING COUNCIL PROJECT 1975-1976

NAME _____ POSITION:

PRINCIPAL _____

SCHOOL _____ TEACHER _____

1. One objective of the JPC program is to develop better communications between the public and parochial systems. Do you feel that, as a result of JPC activities taking place in your school, there has been an increase in the communication between you and your counterpart (principal or teacher) in the other system?

_____ YES _____ NO

If YES, please give specific examples of communication efforts (i.e., meetings, telephone conversations, written communication.)

_____

_____

_____

2. Has the JPC program with which your school is involved served as an impetus for other (non-JPC related) joint public/parochial activities?

_____ YES _____ NO

If YES, please give examples of such activities.

_____

_____

_____

3. Has your school shared educational resources (equipment, facilities, materials) with a school from the other system, other than that which was utilized as part of the program?

_____ YES _____ NO _____ UNKNOWN

If YES, please give examples.

_____

_____

_____

4. We welcome any additional comments or suggestions you care to make concerning your experience with the JPC activity in your school.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS ARE FOR TEACHERS ONLY

5. Are you familiar with the objectives of the city-wide JPC Program? _____ YES _____ NO

6. Did you actively participate in planning the objectives and curriculum for your JPC activity? _____ YES _____ NO

7. Are you satisfied with the progress made in social relationships between the students from different schools? _____ YES _____ NO

8. Are you satisfied with the progress that the students made in the subject area covered by your JPC activity? _____ YES _____ NO

9. Are you satisfied with the student attendance from both systems? (To be answered by teachers of after-school activities) _____ YES _____ NO

APPENDIX C

JPC Student Questionnaire

THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF PHILADELPHIA
OFFICE OF RESEARCH AND EVALUATION
FEDERAL EVALUATION RESOURCE SERVICES

JPC STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE

NAME _____ SCHOOL _____

DATE _____

Please finish the sentence below. You may put from one to seven names in the spaces. Please write both first and last names.

THE STUDENTS THAT I MOST PREFER TO BE WITH DURING THIS ACTIVITY ARE:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____